# *Questions to Ask*
# *Management Services Organizations*

Choosing a Management Service Organization (MSO) might be an overwhelming task. Although there are numerous MSOs in the market today, keep in mind that not all MSOs will meet the unique needs and goals of your practice. By taking one step at a time, you can narrow the list of potential MSOs, learn all you can about the functionality and features of each electronic health record (EHR) system offered, and select the MSO that is right for your practice. There are several things to consider when selecting a MSO and there is a wide range of variance among MSOs. Listed below are questions to consider asking during the MSO selection process to learn more about their organization.

## *General Questions*

1. Explain why a physician should choose to sign up with a MSO. What are the benefits to the provider?
2. What services does the MSO offer (e.g., practice management, personal health records, quality reporting, workflow redesign, etc)?
3. How is the MSO associated to Maryland's Regional Extension Center (REC)?
4. What can the REC do for providers?
5. What is MSO State Designation?
6. When will the MSO achieve MSO State Designation?
7. How long has the MSO been in business?
8. How many providers has the MSO signed to date?
9. How many practices has the MSO assisted in successfully installing an EHR system?

## *Questions about EHRs*



10. Which EHR product(s) do you offer?
11. Is the product certified by an ONC-Authorized Testing and Certification Body? Is the product certified as a Complete EHR?
12. Is the EHR product appropriate for a small or large sized practice?
13. What are the functionalities of the EHR?
14. How is the EHR customizable? How are templates created?

15. Does the system have the ability to let the user customize screens or define required fields that are particular to the practice?
16. Are EHR product interfaces available?  What is the cost for each interface?
17. How is user authorization verified?
18. Do audit trails show which users performed data input?
19. Can my current practice management system be upgraded/integrated with the EHR system?
20. Is data entry set up to minimize keystrokes?
21. How difficult is it to create customizable reports?
22. How is implementation training structured?
23. How are updates installed?
24. What is the implementation timeline, from signing the contract to full integration?  How long does it take to install the software and have the EHR fully operable in my practice?
25. What is the plan for new releases?
26. Is there a cost for version upgrades?
27. Can the MSO arrange a demonstration with your EHR product?
28. Do you provide support 24/7/365?
29. Who owns the patient information?

## *Other Questions*

30. How will the MSO help me achieve meaningful use?
31. How does the EHR system produce reports required for meaningful use?
32. Will the MSO connect to the statewide health information exchange?  If so, when, and what will be the cost to providers?
33. What is the cost to join the MSO?
34. What is the pricing structure, (i.e., what does the monthly subscription include, what extra services are not included, etc.)?
35. Does the MSO provide hardware (e.g., scanners, computers, monitors, tablets, etc.)?
36. Are HIPAA and related confidentiality requirements satisfied by the EHR system?
37. How do I receive EHR incentive payments?
38. Why should I choose this MSO over others?